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# News Release

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**October 31, 2012**

### **VA BHHCS Hosts Caregiver Information Fair**

VA Black Hills Health Care System (BHHCS) is planning two free informational fairs for family caregivers of Veterans, for National Family Caregiver Month. These events will be a great way for caregivers to find out what services are available in their community and gather information.

The first fair will be November 9 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Fort Meade VA Medical Center, in room 341B of Building 145. The second fair will be on November 16 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Hot Springs VA Medical Center, in room A002 of building 12.

A family caregiver is someone who provides personal care services for a Veteran. These services could include assistance with activities of daily living like personal hygiene or providing supervision to ensure the safety of the Veteran. A caregiver can be a spouse, significant other, adult child or family member.

The theme for this year's National Family Caregiver Month is "Family Caregivers Matter!" Family caregivers are often the unacknowledged backbone of the nation's health care system. They provide daily assistance to manage health care needs as well as personal care while ensuring their loved ones desire to stay in the community longer. Forty-three percent of caregivers report spending 40 hours a week or more providing care to their family member, according to 2010 study, *Caregivers of Veterans—Serving on the Homefront*.

The VA's Caregiver Support Program was developed to support caregivers of Veterans, the VA's partners in ensuring the best care of Veterans. The program provides a wide range of services to Caregivers of eligible Veterans of all eras. Services included assistance with accessing additional VA services as well as provide education and emotional support. The program also provides services to caregivers of Veterans, or Service members undergoing medical discharge, who incurred or aggravated a serious injury – including Traumatic Brain Injury, psychological trauma or other mental disorders – in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001.

Caregivers of eligible Veterans are urged on inquire about the program at both informational fairs or by calling the Caregiver Support Coordinator, Kay Ermish at 745-2000, extension 2347. More information is also available at: <http://www.caregiver.va.gov/>

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